

Public Affairs Field Guide

For Joint Information Center Operations

March 2004



FEMA

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Mission

To contribute to the well-being of the community following a disaster by ensuring the dissemination of information that:

- ❑ Is timely, accurate, consistent and easy to understand;
- ❑ Explains what people can expect from their government;
- ❑ Demonstrates clearly that FEMA and other federal, state, local and voluntary agencies are working together to provide the services needed to rebuild communities and restore lives.

Disaster Overview

Types of Disasters

The size and scope of the disaster determine the level of response and the extent of operations initiated by public affairs. Disasters can be divided into three broad categories:

Catastrophic: There is widespread destruction and devastation of homes and business and/or infrastructure and public property. Based on initial observation, it is evident that the response is beyond the combined capabilities of the state and local governments. The governor is likely to request a disaster declaration prior to any preliminary damage assessment. A presidential disaster declaration is likely to be signed within hours. The event dominates news worldwide.

Severe or nationally significant: There is widespread destruction of homes and businesses and/or infrastructure and public property. Initial observations indicate that response and recovery is likely to be beyond the capability of the state and local governments. The governor may request a disaster declaration before preliminary damage assessments are completed. The request may be expedited so that the president within a matter of hours or a few days can sign a major disaster declaration. The event is the subject of ongoing national media coverage.

Localized: Usually characterized by destruction of homes and businesses and/or infrastructure and public property. Occasionally, localized disasters or emergencies may be declared when the impact of a specific event causes undue hardship on an area or population. A preliminary damage assessment is completed and findings indicate the response is beyond the combined capability of state and local governments. FEMA and the White House then review the request. Having a disaster declaration signed may take anywhere from several hours to a few days or weeks, depending on the nature of the request and the information provided by the state. The event may receive some short-term national media coverage.

Anatomy of a Disaster

Incident

The event causing destruction or losses that may trigger a disaster declaration may be a flood, fire, hurricane, or other event as specified in Public Law 93-288 as amended (The Stafford Act).

While the event may be considered a disaster in a given area, as far as FEMA or other federal agencies are concerned, no federal recovery programs may be implemented until the president signs a disaster declaration. Not all incidents result in presidential declarations. According to the Stafford Act, response to the incident must be beyond the combined capability of local and state governments to qualify for a declaration.

Initial Federal Response

Regional Operation Center (ROC) is activated. Staff is deployed to a ROC at either the regional office or federal regional center to provide technical assistance and coordinate with state officials. (**Note:** The ROC may be staffed before an incident occurs; e.g., a hurricane.)

Emergency Support Team (EST) may be activated at FEMA headquarters depending on the projected scope and potential impact. A full EST with all emergency support functions (ESFs) may be activated or only a partial EST with a limited number of functions included. With a limited EST, the Information and Planning Function (ESF-5) will most likely be activated to generate situation reports and other documents. (**Note:** EST may be staffed before an incident; e.g., a hurricane.)

Joint Information Center (JIC) may be established at the headquarters EST in catastrophic or nationally significant incidents.

Satellite broadcast transmissions may be initiated from headquarters in catastrophic or nationally significant incidents.

National Emergency Response Team (ERT-N) may be deployed by the director of FEMA in catastrophic or near catastrophic situations, providing staff to direct the response in support of state and FEMA regional resources.

Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDAs) The state asks FEMA, through the regional office, to participate in a preliminary damage assessment for a potential human services and/or infrastructure disaster declaration. Teams consisting of representatives from FEMA, the state, and other federal or state agencies (as appropriate) review the impact on individuals, households and public facilities.

Members of the media may ask to cover PDA teams. It may be appropriate to refer such requests to state or local officials; the regional public affairs officer may make the determination with the state regarding the need for public affairs personnel to handle media for the PDA teams.

PDA findings are used as the basis for the governor's request and also are used by FEMA in developing two key documents: the Regional Summary and the Regional Analysis and Recommendations. These documents are prepared after a request for a disaster declaration is received from the governor. Neither are public documents; they are only recommendations.

In some incidents, the governor's request may be submitted to FEMA prior to the PDAs.

Governor's Request

The governor will request a major disaster declaration based on a determination by the state that the response is beyond the combined capability of the local and the state governments. The request is submitted through FEMA to the White House. Once a request is received, it is considered "in process" until a determination is made by the White House. It is not appropriate to tell the media *where* in the process it is (at the region, the director has it, its in the White House, etc.), but simply "in process." The disaster declaration can be made in a matter of hours in a catastrophic situation or as long as several weeks depending on the nature of the request.

Regional Summary/Regional Analysis & Recommendations

These documents outline the scope of the losses and make recommendations as to the needs of the disaster-affected area. Neither the documents nor the recommendations are to be made public.

Presidential Disaster Declaration

If the situation is of significant severity and magnitude to warrant a major disaster or an emergency declaration, the president signs the declaration. If, after careful review by FEMA and the White House, it is determined that the situation is not beyond the capabilities of the state and local governments a request may be denied. A letter explaining the denial is sent to the governor by the director of FEMA. States have the right to appeal.

When a disaster is declared, the president identifies the scope of the assistance programs and the director of FEMA designates the affected counties. The president appoints a federal coordinating officer (FCO) to direct the federal response and recovery activities. The FCO has the authority to include additional counties if further evaluation proves such action is warranted.

The White House makes initial announcement of the disaster declaration. Media notification and the first news release regarding specifics about the declaration and the disaster assistance programs is written and disseminated by the headquarters Public Affairs Division.

Application and Information Line Activated (1-800-621-FEMA)

The National Teleregistration Center (NTC) is activated immediately in disasters involving Assistance to Individuals and Households programs.

Disaster Field Office Established

Generally the DFO is established within 48 hours of the declaration to provide a base of operations for federal and state agencies involved in the response and recovery activities. The JIC is located at the DFO.

Joint Information Center Established

In catastrophic or nationally significant disasters, a JIC is established to coordinate the dissemination of information about all state and federal disaster response and recovery programs. PAOs representing all of the federal, state, local and voluntary agencies providing response or recovery services are invited to co-locate and be part of JIC operations. Smaller disasters may have smaller JICs.

Disaster Recovery Centers

Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) may be opened at locations designated by local and state officials. Victims are able to meet with representatives of various federal, state and voluntary agencies.

Federal/State Agreement

The federal/state agreement details the terms under which federal aid is granted, including any cost-sharing provisions. The governor and the regional director sign this document. Timing of the signing and focus relative to media attention varies.

Usually, the governor determines whether the signing will be a media event or a quiet ceremony, and whether it will be held before or after the federal/state meeting. The FCO or regional director may have preferences regarding this.

Federal/State Meeting

This is a meeting of representatives from all federal, state, and voluntary agencies offering programs for people and communities affected by the disaster. This meeting is important for public affairs, particularly if individual and households assistance programs have been activated.

The lead PAO may be asked to speak about public affairs policies and organization for that declaration. A briefing for other federal and state agency PAOs may be held at this time to discuss the JIS/JIC and staffing if the scope of the disaster warrants it.

Initial Public Assistance Activities

Briefings are held by the state at central locations in declared counties to inform eligible applicants about the scope of the disaster aid and how to apply for federal funding.

The Joint Information System

Partnership and teamwork are key when it comes to achieving the joint information system mission and implementing successful public affairs programs following a major disaster. When assigned to a disaster, PAOs are key members of the staff of the FCO and also a component of the headquarters Public Affairs Division. Each member of the public affairs staff is responsible for fostering positive working relationships with all program areas and with other federal, state and voluntary agency personnel.

Working With Headquarters Public Affairs (EA-PA)

As part of the public affairs operation, PAOs working in the joint information center, at the disaster field office, or anywhere in the field are responsible for communicating information about FEMA's programs and how these programs affect individuals at the local and state level. PAOs should view their relationship with EA-PA much like that of working in a local public affairs office for a large national corporation. A great deal of the work is handled at the local level, but the central messages and the manner in which information is communicated are directed by national policy. The lead PAO is responsible for maintaining communications with EA-PA.

Working With the FCO

The lead PAO is the key advisor to the FCO on public affairs matters. This means that good working relationships between the public affairs team and members of the FCO's immediate staff are essential. The lead PAO is part of the FCO's decision-making team. He or she meets with the FCO on a regular basis, attends all senior staff meetings and is included in meetings involving policy and the implementation of programs that could have an impact on public opinion regarding the response, recovery and mitigation operations.

Working With the State PAO

FEMA's lead PAO and the state PAO manage the joint information center. The state PAO most often will be the PAO from the state emergency management agency, but in some cases, could be the PAO from another agency in the governor's office or a state disaster reservist. The state PAO reports to the state coordinating officer (SCO) and serves as the primary media contact for the state. The state PAO can offer valuable insights into crucial issues and in dealing with the state and local media. In the early phases of the response and recovery operations, coordination with the governor's press secretary may be necessary regarding media strategies for initial announcements and media events. The state PAO will usually know how the governor's office generally sets the stage for these early media events.

The External Affairs Model

In the DFO, the External Affairs model is used for strategic coordination of public messages. External Affairs components in the DFO are: public affairs, congressional and intergovernmental affairs and community relations. Coordinating the strategic message within external affairs is crucial to a successful media campaign. In large disasters there may be an assigned external

affairs officer. In smaller disasters the external affairs coordination will be a joint responsibility of the PAO, CLO and CRC.

Working With the Congressional Liaison Officer

Coordination with the congressional liaison officer (CLO) is a very important part of public affairs activities. The lead PAO meets regularly with the CLO. The CLO needs to be kept informed of all anticipated news conferences and media events. Public affairs needs to know about congressional tours and concerns. The CLO may ask that appropriate congressional staff be included on the distribution list for news releases and other materials. The lead PAO communicates daily with the congressional liaison officer.

Working With the Community Relations Coordinator (CRC)

It is important for public affairs and community relations to work closely together. Public affairs shapes the message, community relations is responsible for delivering the messages to key audiences. Community relations officers are in direct contact with disaster victims on a daily basis and can provide critical information about what is happening on the ground in affected areas. Public affairs develops and provides community relations with fliers on the toll-free application and information line, the opening of disaster recovery centers and FEMA/state/local community meetings. The community relations team is often located in close proximity to the joint information center to facilitate the kind of coordination and communication that is necessary for a successful public information campaign. The lead PAO meets daily with the community relations coordinator.

Working With Program Managers

Program managers are the best source of accurate and current information about disaster programs. It is very important to understand the demands facing program managers and other recovery workers, respect their technical expertise and, when possible, make sure demands of the media do not interfere with program operations. Program managers should be alerted to any potential problems arising in the media and kept informed of public affairs activities. Media training may be provided to program managers if they are identified as spokespersons.

Working With Public Affairs Officers from Other Agencies

Cooperation and understanding among public affairs staff from all of the agencies of the FRP are central to the joint information system. PAOs from other federal and state agencies often work in the joint information center as their agencies' on-site spokespersons, generating news releases, responding to media inquiries and working as part of the joint information center team. A PAO may be assigned primarily to support the overall joint information center mission and lend individual particular expertise and talents to the operation. The one rule to remember in working with representatives from other agencies is to always have them review releases that refer to their programs and to send requests for information to the appropriate spokesperson.

Standard Operating Procedures for Joint Information Center Functions

Introduction

This document provides comprehensive standard operating procedures (SOPs), based on public affairs requirements identified in the Federal Response Plan. In times of disaster, information can be as important as food, water and shelter. Providing a uniform, coordinated, consistent message to the public is critical.

The joint information system mission starts as soon as an event begins that could develop into a major disaster. Because of the critical nature of providing emergency information to disaster victims, time spent getting organized rather than responding at the time of an event can lead to confusion and a loss of public confidence.

Objectives

Public affairs must develop and implement strategies to:

- ❑ Instill confidence in the community that all levels of government are working in partnership to restore essential services and help individuals begin to put their lives back together;
- ❑ Work with the media to promote a positive understanding of federal and state response, recovery and mitigation programs;
- ❑ Provide all target markets with equal access to timely and accurate information about disaster response, recovery and mitigation programs;
- ❑ Manage expectations so that disaster victims have a clear understanding of all disaster response, recovery and mitigation services available to them; and
- ❑ Support state and local efforts to reach disaster victims with specific program information.

The Joint Information Center

The FEMA lead PAO for the disaster and the state's lead PAO are responsible for directing and coordinating the joint information system and for making sure the joint information center is established, staffed and functioning efficiently. Together they are responsible for implementing local and regional media strategies that include systems to provide the disaster victims, the general public, and various target audiences with accurate, timely, consistent and easy-to-understand information about disaster response, recovery and mitigation operations.

The standard operating procedures provide a functional chart and descriptions of what is to be expected for persons operating in each function. In a large-scale catastrophic event, each function would be staffed—probably with a group leader and a number of specialists. In a smaller-scale operation, an individual public affairs specialist might be asked to perform two or more related tasks.

Joint Information Center

Functional Chart



----- Dotted lines indicate coordination

Special Assistant functions filled as required by scope of disaster

The standard operating procedures are designed to provide guidance for effective and consistent implementation of these strategies and the delivery of key messages. However, each disaster is different and each joint information center will develop its own character. Working in a JIC requires cooperation, teamwork and flexibility. Public affairs officers must perform well under pressure, adapt to changing circumstances, and be able to think and react quickly.

Public Affairs Staffing and Reporting Structure

The number of staff assigned to a joint information center depends on the size, nature and/or complexity of the disaster. In general, there is a lead PAO, a deputy lead PAO and staff PAOs responsible for several JIC functions. In small-scale operations, the lead PAO may be working alone or with just a few staff performing all JIC functions.

Public affairs policies and procedures for disaster response, recovery and mitigation operations are established by headquarters Public Affairs and implemented by the federal coordinating officer and the lead PAO.

In all joint information center operations, FEMA public affairs staff report to the FEMA lead PAO. State public affairs staff report to the state lead PAO. Public affairs leads may delegate responsibility for specific functions to a deputy or deputies or to group coordinators. The FEMA lead PAO is a member of the FCO's immediate staff and serves as the spokesperson for the FCO and as advisor to the FCO on public affairs issues. The FEMA lead PAO also reports to headquarters Public Affairs.

Before the Disaster Declaration

Immediately following an incident, PAOs may be put on alert while awaiting a presidential declaration, or may be activated to staff the regional operations center, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), or to accompany preliminary damage assessment teams. During this period, the responsibility for disaster operations is primarily handled by local and state emergency rescue and relief organizations, or supplemented by federal resources upon activation of the Federal Response Plan. Emergency needs for clothing, food, shelter and medical assistance are usually handled by local resources or by the American Red Cross and other voluntary organizations active in disasters (VOADs).

PAOs may be asked to accompany a PDA team, respond to media inquiries and coordinate with the state to identify demographic and sensitive issues.

***Note:** If asked when assistance will begin, it may be appropriate to say that assistance has already begun via the American Red Cross and other voluntary agencies. If FEMA has received a governor's request for a major disaster declaration, it is appropriate to say that the request is "in process" until a determination is made by the White House. It is not appropriate to say where in the process it is (its at the region, the director has it, its in the White House, etc.), but simply "in process." This process can take a matter of hours in a catastrophic situation, or longer depending on the nature of the request. If no request has been received, explain the declaration process and provide fact sheets. Refer national media inquiries and requests for interviews to headquarters Public Affairs.*

PAO Activities Checklist

Incident

PAO Activity

- ☐ DAEs put on alert by cadre managers.
- ☐ HQ/Region monitor and analyze news coverage.
- ☐ HQ/Region respond to media inquiries.

Products Required

- ☐ FEMA fact sheets and information on the declaration process

Pre-declaration

PAO Activity

- ☐ FEMA regional PAO coordinates with EA-PA.
- ☐ Staff ROC and EOC as needed.
- ☐ Accompany PDA teams.
- ☐ Respond to media inquiries.
- ☐ Refer national media inquiries to HQ.
- ☐ Gather information.
- ☐ Begin clips file.
- ☐ Coordinate with the state to understand demographics and local sensitivities and to develop strategies for targeting messages.
- ☐ Begin media list development.
- ☐ Develop public affairs strategies for news briefings and press conferences.

Presidential Disaster Declaration

PAO Activity

- ☐ EA-PA disseminates initial release.
- ☐ Develop seven-day media plan.
- ☐ Meet with FCO.
- ☐ Meet with state PAO.
- ☐ Keep EA-PA informed of daily activities.
- ☐ Notify media of PAO contact on-site.
- ☐ Gather the following pertinent information:
 - Type of disaster declaration (IA/PA)
 - Location—declared counties
 - Incident date/period
 - Key personnel names
 - Governor's request
 - Possibility of add-on counties
 - Special situations
 - Language needs

- ❑ Determine federal agencies' PAO staffing requirements.
- ❑ Begin planning for JIC needs.
- ❑ Speak with state PAO and/or governor's press secretary.
- ❑ Coordinate messages and products with community relations
- ❑ Obtain maps.
- ❑ Obtain and/or develop media lists and provide changes/additions to EA-PA Spectrafax.
- ❑ Attend staff meetings.
- ❑ Coordinate announcements with governor's office or state PAO.
- ❑ Prepare for federal/state meeting.
- ❑ Ensure photo and video documentation activities are under way.

Application/Information Line Established (1-800-621-FEMA)

PAO Activity

- ❑ Pitch application story to TV stations and newspapers
- ❑ Initiate media callouts to print, radio and television outlets
- ❑ Design flyer for community relations
- ❑ Establish liaison with NTC

Products Required

- ❑ Application news release
- ❑ PSAs
- ❑ NTC b-roll
- ❑ Talking points
- ❑ Flyer

Disaster Field Office Established

PAO Activity

- ❑ Prepare analysis of news coverage for FCO and EA-PA.
- ❑ Notify media of DFO opening and media-only phone numbers.
- ❑ Prepare news releases.
- ❑ Set up JIC.
- ❑ Coordinate staffing with DFO ADD staff and EA-PA
- ❑ Attend daily FCO staff meetings.
- ❑ Maintain routine contact with EA-PA.
- ❑ Notify EA-PA of interview requests from national media or networks.
- ❑ Establish rapid response.
- ❑ Maintain media list/coordinate with EA-PA Spectrafax.
- ❑ Set up internal and external distribution systems.
- ❑ Attend daily JIC staff meetings.
- ❑ Arrange for acquisition of local papers.
- ❑ Circulate news clips.
- ❑ Prepare program fact sheets.
- ❑ Coordinate media coverage of activities.

- ☐ Place high priority on news analysis and monitoring.
- ☐ Complete daily activity summary.
- ☐ Maintain media contact log.
- ☐ Determine need for special projects.

Products Required

- ☐ Media advisory
- ☐ News releases
- ☐ Media lists
- ☐ News clips
- ☐ News analysis reports
- ☐ Fact sheets
- ☐ Daily activity summaries
- ☐ Media contact log

Federal/State Meeting

PAO Activity

- ☐ Prepare media packets.
- ☐ Write news release or media advisory.
- ☐ Work with state PAO and governor's office.
- ☐ The lead PAO may be asked to speak briefly.
- ☐ Comments should include:
 - Getting critical information to people about disaster programs;
 - Coordinating information to ensure people are receiving consistent and accurate messages about the disaster; and
 - Requesting other federal agencies to coordinate release of information through the joint information center to ensure accuracy and consistency of information for disaster victims.
- ☐ Meet with other agency PAOs to:
 - Explain Joint Information System;
 - Explain Joint Information Center operations;
 - Encourage cooperation; and
 - Encourage representation in JIC.

Products Required

- ☐ News release
- ☐ Media advisory
- ☐ Talking points
- ☐ Fact sheets

Information Services Emphasized (1-800-621-FEMA)

PAO Activity

- ☐ Prepare news release.
- ☐ Prepare public service announcement.

- ☐ Drive-time call-outs.
- ☐ Prepare flyer for community relations

Products Required

- ☐ News release
- ☐ PSA
- ☐ Flyer

Disaster Recovery Centers Open

PAO Activity

- ☐ Assign field PAOs to DRC openings.
- ☐ Review Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act.
- ☐ Brief DRC managers on dealing with the media at training meeting.
- ☐ Monitor DRC activities.
- ☐ Provide media update on DRC activities.
- ☐ Publicize human services programs.
- ☐ Distribute *Recovery Times*.

Products Required

- ☐ Fliers
- ☐ Posters
- ☐ Brochures
- ☐ News releases
- ☐ Fact sheets

Infrastructure Briefings

PAO Activity

- ☐ Write news release.
- ☐ Coordinate with state PAO.
- ☐ Attend applicant briefings.
- ☐ Handle media inquiries.
- ☐ Monitor coverage.

Materials Required

- ☐ News release
- ☐ Talking points

DRCs Close/Consolidate

PAO Activity

- ☐ Write news release; disseminate with at least 5-day notice.
- ☐ Publicize **1-800-621-FEMA** as information alternative to DRC.
- ☐ Publicize program deadlines as they approach.

Products Required

- ☐ News releases
- ☐ Fliers
- ☐ PSAs

Hazard Mitigation Activities

PAO activities

- ☐ Write news releases
- ☐ Arrange media coverage
- ☐ Coordinate news releases on historic preservation
- ☐ Develop mitigation success stories
- ☐ Develop mitigation media events

Products Required

- ☐ News release
- ☐ Talking points
- ☐ Media packets

DFO Closes

PAO Activities

- ☐ Notify media of closing and alternate numbers for follow-up stories
- ☐ Prepare close-out news release summarizing activities.
- ☐ Provide contact information.
- ☐ Complete PAO section of after-action report.
- ☐ Return equipment and supplies.
- ☐ Update list of equipment and supplies.
- ☐ Inventory go-kits.
- ☐ Final report to EA-PA.

Materials Required

- ☐ Media advisory
- ☐ Summary news release
- ☐ Thank you letters to the media.

Index of JIC Functions

Note: the staffing required for each function will depend on the size of the disaster and the issues of the affected area.

Public Affairs Leads and Support Staff

- Lead PAO, deputy lead PAO
- State lead PAO
- Photographers
- Other agency PAOs

Finance and Admin

- Office manager
- Admin assistant

Media Relations Operations

- Media relations coordinator
- News desk
- Rapid response
- News monitoring & analysis specialist
- Program schedulers
- Field coordinator
- Field PAOs

Research & Writing

- Research and writing coordinator
- Writers
- Recovery Times* liaison
- PAO liaisons (ESFs, human services, infrastructure, hazard mitigation, community relations, congressional, NFIP, and others within or outside the JIC).

Special Projects

- Videographers
- Field producers
- FRN liaison
- Advance specialist
- Training specialist

Multilingual Operations

- Multilingual coordinator
- Field PAOs
- Translators (may be by contract)
- Spokespersons
- News monitoring & analysis

Lead Public Affairs Officer

Advises the FCO on all public affairs matters associated with disaster response, recovery and mitigation programs, policies and issues. Keeps FCO and EA-PA informed of potential or existing problems. Coordinates the procedures for dealing with regional media and manages the establishment and operation of the Joint Information Center.

Standard Operating Procedures

Initial Actions

- ❑ Meet or talk with FCO, EA-PA, SCO and state PAO to assess scope of disaster and public affairs needs. Consider the following:
 - ❑ Population demographics
 - ❑ Local political sensitivities
 - ❑ Issues from a previous disaster
 - ❑ Demographic and multilingual considerations
 - ❑ Early deployment of staff for field operations, media relations, multilingual operations and research and writing.
 - ❑ Preliminary damage assessment activities
- ❑ Work with FCO to develop a list of authorized media spokespersons.
 - ❑ Prepare a memo listing spokespersons and outlining when and how they are to be utilized.
 - ❑ Provide media training to spokespersons if necessary.
- ❑ Accompany the FCO and other FEMA personnel on media interviews.
- ❑ Consult with EA-PA on handling requests for information from national media.
- ❑ Contact congressional liaison and community relations officers to assess special information requirements and/or political sensitivities.
- ❑ Handle media for federal/state meeting.
 - ❑ Explain the public affairs mission and JIC concept of operations
 - ❑ Provide press kits and establish contact with media at meeting.
 - ❑ Have separate sign-up sheet for members of the media.
- ❑ Schedule briefing for other agency PAOs on Joint Information System concept and Joint Information Center operations.
- ❑ Establish other agency PAO contact list. Get names and fax numbers.
- ❑ Develop JIC staffing and organizational chart in coordination with regional PAO, national cadre manager and ADD specialist in DFO.
- ❑ Develop a written public affairs plan for the first week of operations, to include daily messages, media events and editorial products.
- ❑ Notify other federal, state and voluntary agencies that the JIC is being established.
 - Determine which federal agencies should send PAOs to staff the Joint Information Center based on the agency's role in the disaster. Request support for staffing to other federal and state agencies based on the operating needs of the

Joint Information Center. Depending on the size, these can include, but are not limited to:

- Small Business Administration
 - American Red Cross
 - US Army Corps of Engineers
 - Environmental Protection Agency
 - Department of Agriculture
 - Department of Labor
 - Housing and Urban Development
 - Internal Revenue Service
 - US Army
 - US Coast Guard
 - State agencies as determined by the SCO or state PAO
- ❑ Request that congressional affairs and community relations be located adjacent to the Joint Information Center if possible.
 - ❑ Coordinate with office manager and operations support for space, equipment and supplies.
 - ❑ Ask office manager to handle requests for equipment and supplies to accommodate Joint Information Center personnel.
 - ❑ Meet with office manager to develop a schedule to include:
 - Daily staff meetings
 - “Hot Wash” at the end of each day
 - Daily program updates for the media
 - Reports for EA-PA and ESF-5
 - Routine training sessions on programs and policies
 - Procedures for news analysis and distribution of news clips
 - ❑ Get initial approval of Recovery Times copy

Ongoing Actions

- ❑ Manage production and dissemination of FEMA response, recovery and mitigation information.
- ❑ Consult with state lead PAO on all matters pertaining to the joint public affairs effort.
- ❑ Coordinate JIC activities and information dissemination with state lead PAO and PAOs from other federal, state, local and voluntary agencies.

Federal Coordinating Officer

- ❑ Meet daily with FCO to discuss current and potential issues that affect public perception.
- ❑ Attend all senior staff meetings and all other meetings where decisions are made that could impact public opinion regarding response, recovery and mitigation operations.
- ❑ Obtain FCO approval of news releases and all other materials distributed to the media and disaster victims.
- ❑ Provide copies of news analysis reports, clips, news releases and all other materials distributed to the media and disaster victims.
- ❑ Provide daily activity reports during the first few weeks.

EA-PA & Regional PAO

- Maintain regular contact with EA-PA and regional PAO.
- E-mail or fax copies of clips to EA-PA and regional PAO daily by 9 a.m.
- Report information about negative coverage immediately to EA-PA.
- Discuss negative coverage with EA-PA, FCO, state PAO and regional PAO.
- Refer requests for interviews from national media to EA-PA; report all contacts with networks or national media.
- Get EA-PA approval on sensitive or potentially controversial news releases. Routine releases do not require approval by EA-PA.

Congressional Liaison

- ❑ Inform CLO of anticipated news conferences, briefings and other media activities.
- ❑ Develop strategy for coordination and timing when providing news releases or other materials to congressional offices.
- ❑ Add appropriate congressional staff to fax list for news releases and other materials, if requested by the CLO.
- ❑ Provide copies of news clippings, news releases, fact sheets, fliers and posters.
- ❑ Provide information on trends, issues, demographics, politics and recurring questions posed by the media about the status of the recovery. Seek information on trends, issues, demographics, politics.
- ❑ Establish a daily routine for communicating and coordinating on the following issues (this is made easier by having CLO participate in 7-day media plan):
 - Discussion and approval of messages;
 - Timing and release of information;
 - Determining whether information is reaching intended audiences;
 - Potential problems; and
 - Special events, such as news conferences or congressional visits.

Community Relations

- ❑ Develop a system for continuing coordination and communication with Community Relations Coordinator.
- ❑ Set up system for PAO field operations to work cooperatively with community relations teams.
- ❑ Seek information from CR coordinator regarding demographics in the disaster area—multilingual, multicultural and such special populations as the disabled and the elderly—for use in targeting messages to reach all disaster victims.
- ❑ **Ensure that all materials prepared for distribution to the public are coordinated through the Joint Information Center and routed through the approval process established for news releases.**
- ❑ Identify need for and provide fliers, brochures, posters and other printed materials for distribution by community relations.

- ❑ Depending on the demographics, some fliers may need to be translated. Provide translation assistance if necessary.
- ❑ Establish a daily routine for sharing information on messages, the timing and release of information and determining whether information is reaching intended audiences. Make sure CR participates in developing 7-day media plan.
- ❑ Seek information from community relations on trends, issues, demographics, local sensitivities and questions being posed by communities and disaster victims.
- ❑ Coordinate community meetings, special events, distribution of Recovery Times and media outreach campaigns.

Close-Out Actions

- ❑ Notify media of closing and provide regional contact information.
- ❑ Prepare comprehensive close-out news release for EA-PA approval and distribution.
- ❑ Complete after-action report.
- ❑ Return equipment and supplies.
- ❑ Update list of equipment and supplies.
- ❑ Inventory go-kits.
- ❑ Provide final report to EA-PA.

State Lead Public Affairs Officer

Represents the state and acts as liaison to the governor's office on all public affairs matters associated with the disaster. Coordinates procedures for dealing with the media.

Objectives

The state determines the objectives and standard operating procedures for their own personnel. However, the following objectives are common to most states.

Develop and implement public affairs strategies designed to:

- ❑ Instill confidence in the community that the state is utilizing all possible resources and is working in partnership with FEMA, and other federal and state agencies, to restore essential services and help individuals begin the recovery process;
- ❑ Work with the media to promote a positive understanding of response, recovery and mitigation programs;
- ❑ Provide all target markets with equal access to timely and accurate information about disaster response, recovery and mitigation programs; and
- ❑ Manage expectations so that disaster victims have a clear understanding of all disaster response, recovery and mitigation services available to them.

Standard Operating Procedures

- ❑ Meet with the SCO, governor's press secretary and FEMA lead PAO to assess scope of the disaster and public affairs requirements.
- ❑ Serve as spokesperson and public affairs advisor to the Governor's Authorized Representative (GAR) and SCO.
- ❑ Accompany the GAR/SCO and other state personnel on media interviews. Provide technical advice and coaching on what to expect and how to handle each interview.
- ❑ Coordinate with FEMA lead PAO on staffing requirements for JIC functions.
 - ❑ Determine availability and make assignments for other state PAOs in the JIC.
 - ❑ Notify FEMA lead PAO of office requirements for state public affairs staff.
- ❑ Work with FEMA lead PAO on overall JIC staffing and organization. Assess needs for field PAOs and PAO liaison operations and request sufficient staff through the SCO to perform all functions.
- ❑ Coordinate with FEMA lead PAO the development of the daily operating schedule to include media briefings, staff meetings, "hot wash" at the end of each day, update reports for the media, distribution of news analysis and other activities.
- ❑ Attend Federal/State meeting.
- ❑ Attend FCO/SCO staff meetings, planning meetings and other meetings as required.
- ❑ Represent the SCO, as required, at community meetings or other forums.
- ❑ Review, edit and approve all written products.
- ❑ Coordinate with FEMA lead PAO the strategies for reaching target audiences.
- ❑ Implement strategies and projects initiated by the SCO.
- ❑ Determine the need for media training for state spokespersons.

Deputy Lead Public Affairs Officer

Assists the lead PAO in the implementation of Public Affairs activities for all disaster response, recovery and mitigation programs.

Note: In a catastrophic disaster, the duties of the deputy lead PAO could be divided among the regional PAOs assigned to the ERT-N, the regional PAO from the host region and others as necessary.

Standard Operating Procedures

- ❑ Work closely with the lead PAO to ensure that all public affairs functions are operating efficiently.
- ❑ Assist in the media planning process
- ❑ As directed, represent the FEMA lead PAO at meetings, briefings or forums.
- ❑ Assume responsibilities of the lead PAO as needed and assigned.
- ❑ Support the lead PAO in the following areas:
 - Establishing the Joint Information Center.
 - Managing day-to-day operations of the Joint Information Center.
 - Coordinating space and equipment requirements.
 - Coordinating JIC activities and information dissemination with PAOs from other federal, state, local and voluntary agencies.
 - Managing the production and dissemination of response, recovery and mitigation information.
 - Editing and approving press releases, PSAs, talking points and other documents.
 - Developing and implementing strategies for informing the media and disaster victims about response, recovery and mitigation programs.

Interagency Coordination

Other agency PAOs, co-located in the Joint Information Center, carry out the public affairs activities of their agencies and support the overall mission of the Joint Information Center. PAO representatives from federal, state, local and voluntary agencies work side-by-side to ensure coordination of information for release to the media and the public.

Objectives

- ❑ To serve as part of a public affairs team demonstrating that federal, state and local government and voluntary agencies are working together in partnership providing critical services designed to help individuals and communities respond to and recover from the disaster.
- ❑ To ensure that accurate and timely information about specific programs is disseminated and coordinated with that of other agencies.
- ❑ To develop and implement coordinated public affairs strategies designed to provide disaster victims with a clear understanding of the scope of available services and realistic expectations about when and how those services will be delivered.

Standard Operating Procedures

- ❑ Federal, state, local and voluntary agency representatives assigned to the Joint Information Center will participate in and contribute to the various JIC functions and activities as needed. These can include:
 - News Desk
 - Field PAO
 - Research and Writing
 - Photo and Video Documentation
 - Special Projects
 - Satellite Transmissions
 - Recovery Times
- ❑ Serve as key spokesperson for agency or program.
- ❑ Respond to media inquiries regarding specific program area.
- ❑ Work with field PAOs and program schedulers to identify opportunities for radio, television, or newspaper interviews or talk-show appearances.
- ❑ Prepare news releases, fact sheets and fliers about specific programs.
- ❑ Edit and review copy for program accuracy and consistency.
- ❑ Provide briefings and spokespersons for satellite press conferences
- ❑ Provide copy for Recovery Times.
- ❑ Attend meetings, including JIC staff meetings, daily “hot wash,” Federal/State meeting and others as required.
- ❑ Represent agency at community meetings.

Media Strategy

Developing a media strategy and weekly plan is an important tool in the Joint Information Center. At the onset of the operation, consider the following when putting together your media plan:

- ☐ What are the most important messages that should be disseminated during the first week of this particular disaster?
- ☐ Are there specific emerging issues that could be avoided by crafting messages that would deflect the problem?
- ☐ Once you have your messages or themes, does everyone in the team know what products or activities they are responsible for, and when?
- ☐ Are you managing expectations in your messages?
- ☐ Are you engaging the FCO and other DFO leadership in carrying out those messages to the media and the public? Did you assign staff to work on their talking points?
- ☐ What other agencies (state or federal) could be showcased during the disaster operation?

You can begin by making a simple 7-day ahead chart with the following information, and tailor it to your issues and team operations. Some of the items you could include are:

DAY Theme and/or Event	Products (Assignments)	Media Relations (Assignments)	Coordination (Assignment)
Day 1: Thursday, July 12 Federal Assistance is available; apply by phone.	-Teleregistration news release (J. Wu) -FCO/news desk talking points (J. Wu) -Radio PSAs (K. Jones)	-Drive-time callouts (T. Miller) -Print outreach calls (W. Garcia) -TV scheduling, NPSC b-roll (T. Miller) -Radio scheduling (T. Miller) -FRN interview w/FCO (T. Miller)	-FCO -IA -NPSC
Day 2: Friday, July 13 Director's visit to disaster area	-Media advisory (HQ PA) -Director's talking points (HQ PA) -Trip summary news release (J. Smith) -Web story (J. Smith)	-FRN interview, director (HQ PA) -Drive-time callouts (T. Miller) -Press conference (P. Adipietro) -Schedule media avails w/director -National media outreach (HQ PA)	-HQ Public Affairs -Director's advance team -State and local PIOs -Disaster CLO
Day 3:			
Day 4:			

Again, this is just a sample. Make sure you tailor it to fit the disaster and your team. You do not need a different message every day; rather, expand on messages as the issue progresses or move on to the next message based on feedback from media monitoring and community relations.

Office Manager

Supervises daily operations of the Joint Information Center; executes plans and policies as directed by the lead/deputy lead PAOs. Provides direction for JIC department managers to ensure that all functions are well organized and operating efficiently.

Objectives

- ❑ Assist lead/deputy lead PAOs in establishing the Joint Information Center.
- ❑ Ensure that all JIC functions are well organized and operating efficiently.
- ❑ Support lead/deputy lead PAOs by supervising all operational and administrative activities, including staffing and inter-office communications.
- ❑ Work with DFO logistics staff to ensure proper setup of the JIC, including:
 - Sufficient space, tables, computers and phones for all FEMA, state and other agency PAOs.
 - Tables and phones to provide workspace for other agency PAOs and/or media representatives who may need to work in Joint Information Center occasionally. (Phones provided to the media should provide access to local dialing and long distance operator, but not direct access to long distance.)
 - Support all JIC departments in acquiring, setting up and maintaining necessary equipment, including computers/printers, VCRs, televisions, cable TV service and/or satellite downlink, AM/FM radios, pagers, cellular phones and two-way radios.
 - Briefing area and equipment suitable for broadcast needs (i.e., electrical hookup or lighting).
 - Work areas for all components of the joint information center
- ❑ Establish internal communications procedures, including:
 - Daily staff meetings
 - Daily “Hot Wash” at the end of each day
 - Daily update reports for the media
 - Reports for EA-PA and ESF-5
 - Routine training sessions on programs and policies
 - Procedures for news analysis and distribution of news clips
 - Inter- and intra-office information channels and frequent hard-copy distribution
- ❑ Oversee all daily operations of Joint Information Center providing direction, organization and supervision for branch managers.
- ❑ Supervise preparation of the daily input for the Sit-Rep and EA-PA, if requested.
- ❑ Supervise personnel requirements including time sheet and voucher processing.
- ❑ Perform additional duties and activities as assigned.
- ❑ The DFO logistics staff provides office supplies and furniture.
- ❑ Blanket purchase orders for special services such as computerized mailing services, local photographic series, clipping services or video production services should be requested through operations support.
- ❑ Develop and maintain a good working relationship with DFO logistics staff, ESF-2 (Communications) and computer network operations.

Office Support

- ❑ Supply Joint Information Center with necessary office supplies.
- ❑ Handle word processing, filing, copying and faxing.
- ❑ Post and/or distribute DFO memoranda to JIC staff.
- ❑ Update bulletin boards daily with current statistics, recovery center locations, phone numbers and clippings.
- ❑ Maintain staffing lists:
 - Key personnel and telephone numbers
 - JIC telephone list
 - JIC staffing pattern
 - After-hours contact list
 - Weekend work schedule
 - Briefing kits for new arrivals
 - Organizational and functional charts
- ❑ Distribute daily clips and news analysis summary by 8:00 a.m. to the following offices:
 - FCO/Deputy
 - SCO/Deputy
 - Congressional liaison officer
 - HQ EA-PA (via e-mail or fax)
- ❑ Distribute newspaper clips, TV/radio media monitoring summary and news releases prepared by the Joint Information Center to other DFO departments as soon as possible each day. Distribution list should include:
 - JIC staff
 - Field PAOs
 - Program heads
 - Community relations
 - Emergency support functions
 - Recovery center managers
 - FEMA regional director
 - Other agencies not in Joint Information Center
- ❑ Set up and maintain the public affairs filing system, which should include:
 - Disaster documents:
 - ❑ Correspondence
 - ❑ Governor's request
 - ❑ Hazard mitigation report
 - ❑ Preliminary damage assessments
 - ❑ Presidential disaster declaration
 - Fact sheets:
 - ❑ Disaster fact sheet
 - ❑ Public assistance
 - ❑ Individual and household assistance
 - ❑ Hazard mitigation
 - ❑ NFIP
 - ❑ SBA
 - Copies of invoices, printing, legal notices
 - Daily reports

- Fliers
 - Handouts/brochures
- ❑ Keep sufficient copies of news releases, public service announcements, and fact sheets on file for ongoing distribution while the JIC is operational.
- ❑ Send releases to EA-PA for distribution via Spectrafax
- ❑ Arrange for DFO fax machines to be programmed for faxing to commonly used groups not reached by Spectrafax system.
- ❑ Contact EA-PA to determine who is designated to receive releases for Internet posting.

Media Relations Operations

Media relations operations include news desk, rapid response, media monitoring and analysis, field operations and media list development. News desk staff responds to all incoming media calls, providing information on the latest developments, answering inquiries and providing routine response, recovery and mitigation information. The news desk also contacts targeted media to provide daily actualities regarding disaster response, recovery and mitigation programs, provide media with current data and most-recently-released information, encourage coverage of activities, and schedule media interviews. Field PAOs make on-site visits to local news media outlets usually in areas affected by the disaster and gather information about the recovery effort and media coverage. Demographics and media list development gathers a comprehensive disaster media list, considering all segments of the population including multilingual and multicultural media, trade and targeted publications (elderly, disabled, etc.) to ensure all populations affected by the disaster are reached.

Objectives

- ❑ To provide the media with accurate and timely information about response, recovery and mitigation operations.
- ❑ To build relationships with members of the media and encourage ongoing positive and constructive news coverage.
- ❑ To serve as the primary resource for the media for information regarding all disaster response, recovery and mitigation programs provided by FEMA, the state and other federal, state, local and voluntary agencies.
- ❑ To gather information about the progress of the response, recovery and mitigation operations and public/media perceptions concerning the response, recovery and mitigation effort. Identify potential issues, problems and rumors and report the information immediately to the appropriate members of the Joint Information Center staff including rapid response.

Standard Operating Procedures

News Desk

- ❑ Handle incoming calls from media, providing routine response, recovery and mitigation information. News desk is staffed with PAOs from FEMA, state and other agencies.
- ❑ **Refer inquiries about FEMA policies and critical issues to the Lead PAO or authorized spokesperson.**
- ❑ Refer inquiries from national media about FEMA policy to the lead PAO, the regional PAO and HQ EA-PA.
 - Refer basic inquiries on specific programs provided by other federal or state agencies to the PAO on the news desk for that specific agency.
 - Refer reporters seeking in-depth information about FEMA programs, policies and procedures to the lead PAO, FCO, appropriate program head, or authorized spokesperson.
- ❑ Respond to routine inquiries using prepared talking points or information in news releases or fact sheets.

- ❑ Keep detailed accounts of contacts including name, media outlet, phone numbers, nature of inquiry and results. Submit logs to office support staff to retain for records or enter in database.
- ❑ Notify rapid response and lead PAO **immediately** of any potential problems identified during an interview. This can include inaccurate information expressed by a reporter, a confrontational or argumentative attitude, or reports of rumors, problems, or misinformation in the community.
- ❑ Stress the “Message of the Day” when responding to a reporter’s questions.

Rapid Response

Serves as primary troubleshooter for public affairs operations. Takes immediate action to correct misunderstandings, misinformation and incorrect information that appears in the media or that could be disseminated by the news media. Identifies and takes action to correct problems that could result in the spread of information that could cause the public to lose confidence in the disaster response, recovery and mitigation process.

This function includes troubleshooting and crisis intervention. Not only is this PAO the eyes and ears of the public affairs operation, he or she recommends and initiates actions to correct problems and misunderstandings *before* they get into the news media. Sources of information include field PAO coordinator, field PAOs, congressional affairs, community relations, disaster recovery center managers, elected officials, Helpline operators, program managers, EST operations and representatives of other federal and state agencies.

Rapid response anticipates, prevents and resolves issues using the this model:

- ❑ Analyze and research the situation
 - Clarify the problem
 - Identify the parties involved
 - Identify the perceptions created by the situation
 - Find out the facts and related issues
- ❑ Set communications objectives for a response or line of action
- ❑ Develop a strategy to meet communication objectives
- ❑ Implement the strategy and follow through to make sure the situation is resolved.

Objectives

- ❑ To ensure that all information regarding disaster response, recovery and mitigation programs provided by FEMA, the state and other government agencies is presented by the media in a fair and accurate manner.
- ❑ To instill confidence that FEMA, the state and other government agencies are working diligently and effectively to provide needed disaster response, recovery and mitigation services by taking *immediate* action to facilitate the correction of problems and any inaccurate or misleading information published or broadcast by the media.
- ❑ To provide rumor control and crisis intervention to prevent the spread of information that could cause the public to lose confidence in the disaster response, recovery and mitigation process, or cause them to take unsafe or inappropriate actions.

Standard Operating Procedures

- ❑ Establish procedures with the lead PAO for dealing with the media and handling other problems.
- ❑ Work closely with news analysis, field PAO coordinator and media monitoring staff to ensure they alert rapid response when inaccurate or incorrect information is published or broadcast.
- ❑ Work closely with the field coordinator, field PAOs, PAO liaisons, congressional affairs, community relations and other sources to monitor the flow of information into the community, assess potential problems or rumors and work with the media to provide correct information.
- ❑ Anticipate potential public relations problems and work with EA-PA and lead PAO to develop and implement strategies designed to present a positive understanding of the programs or policies in question.
- ❑ Notify the lead PAO and FCO of any problem coverage including publication or broadcast of inaccurate or misleading information.
- ❑ Keep regional PAO and EA-PA informed about existing or potential problem areas.
- ❑ Strategies for correcting inaccurate or misleading information include, but are not limited to the following:
 - Calling the reporter directly.
 - If a reporter is unwilling to deal with a correction or if problems have been persistent, contacting the editor, news director, or publisher to provide rationale for importance of correction to the community and politely demanding that accurate information be presented in the next news cycle.
 - Providing accurate information to the news outlet to counter incorrect reports.
 - Arranging an interview with the FCO or another knowledgeable program head.
 - Arranging a general media briefing or other media event to demonstrate accurate information.
- ❑ Preparing talking points for the FCO, lead PAO, news desk staff and field PAOs with the correct information.
- ❑ Develop good working relationships with reporters, editors and news directors.
- ❑ Maintain daily media log and records of the nature of media contacts.
- ❑ Document problems and explain how each was resolved.
- ❑ Complete daily activity report for lead PAO.
- ❑ Take on other tasks, as assigned, that can be dropped instantly without creating major problems in the Joint Information Center when rapid response is required.

Field Operations

Serve as the front-line PAOs in the field, with activities coordinated by field coordinator stationed in the Joint Information Center. Work with local news media and serve as vital link to JIC and disaster field office. Identify critical issues and potential problems and report to field coordinator. Work with community relations, on preliminary damage assessment teams, in disaster recovery centers and other sites where disaster response, recovery and mitigation activities take place. Perform media outreach functions, systematically visiting and building relationships with daily and weekly newspapers, local TV, cable and radio stations as well as any other media outlet. May

be assigned to specific special interest or culturally diverse media. Coordinates field PAO activities and serves as JIC point of contact for field PAOs.

Objectives

- ❑ To serve as the front-line for the JIC operation, working directly with the media and providing public affairs support for program officers in the field.
- ❑ To monitor and be aware of any developing rapid response issues.
- ❑ To serve as a resource to local media, maintaining easy access to current and accurate information about FEMA, the state and other government and voluntary agency response, recovery and mitigation programs.
- ❑ To gather first-hand information about the progress of response, recovery and mitigation operations, identify potential issues, problems, or rumors which may surface and report all such information immediately to the Joint Information Center.

Field Coordinator

- ❑ Establish daily reporting procedures.
- ❑ Acquire communications equipment such as cell phones, pagers and two-way radios for field PAOs.
- ❑ Develop a field staffing plan to ensure PAO availability in locations where media are likely to be covering the progress of the disaster recovery.
 - Prepare media kits and materials for field PAOs. Field packages should include:
 - Disaster fact sheets
 - Governor's request letter
 - Declaration letter
 - All current press releases
 - Program fact sheets
- ❑ Assign field PAOs to manage media inquiries at opening of recovery centers, at public assistance briefings and at other events likely to generate media coverage.
- ❑ When specific issues arise, team FEMA PAOs with other agency PAOs, or assign task to appropriate PAOs from other agencies.
- ❑ Develop media outreach strategy for field PAOs.
- ❑ Identify geographic sectors for coverage in coordination with community relations. When possible, team FEMA PAO with a state counterpart.
- ❑ Distribute fact sheets, press releases, PSAs and pertinent information to field PAOs.
- ❑ Coordinate with community relations officer. When possible, assign field PAOs to each community relations sector.
- ❑ When working shared media markets with other states, coordinate activities with field coordinator from that state.

Field PAOs

- ❑ During pre-declaration and early phases of the disaster, field PAOs may be assigned to:
 - Discuss the declaration process with the media.
 - Arrange for media coverage of field inspections.
 - Assist with the arrangements for a news briefing.
- ❑ Establish and maintain positive, professional working relationships with the media.

- ❑ Ensure that the public receives information about disaster aid that creates reasonable expectations of the limits of that aid.
- ❑ Provide field coordinator with newspapers and reports on local media coverage for news analysis and monitoring staff. Fax pertinent articles and daily reports to JIC.
- ❑ Report media contacts and other activities to field coordinator at least twice daily.
- ❑ Provide updated information about current developments and emergency information regarding FEMA programs to the media. Refer to current fact sheets and news releases provided by the field coordinator to assure accuracy. Call field coordinator with any questions regarding updates and accuracy of this information.
- ❑ Refer all inquiries on FEMA policy and issues to field coordinator, for further referral to lead PAO.
- ❑ Refer inquiries for detailed information about other federal, state and voluntary agency programs to appropriate spokesperson.
- ❑ Serve as eyes and ears of Joint Information Center, gather information about perceptions regarding response and recovery process, serve as troubleshooter, anticipating and solving problems on the ground.
- ❑ Brief disaster recovery center managers and staff on working with the news media.
- ❑ Implement media outreach strategy:
 - Coordinate with community relations to work similar territories.
 - Communicate regularly with community relations team member assigned to same sector to identify information needs.
 - Create a schedule to visit each media outlet in geographic area. Meet with the editor, news director, or reporter in each location.
 - Focus on the Message of the Day.

Media List Development

Develops demographic profiles of all populations affected by the disaster including multilingual, multicultural and special populations (e.g., the disabled and the elderly), for use in targeting messages and utilizing appropriate media and information outlets to reach all disaster victims. Develops and maintains comprehensive and current media lists to ensure all populations affected by the disaster are reached.

Objectives

- ❑ To ensure that all disaster victims receive important disaster response, recovery and mitigation information by researching and developing comprehensive demographic information that identifies all populations, including cultural diversity and special needs populations.
- ❑ To ensure efficient delivery of disaster response, recovery and mitigation information to all disaster victims by developing and maintaining current and accurate media lists.
- ❑ To ensure all equal opportunity standards are met in the dissemination of information to disaster victims.

Standard Operating Procedures

- ❑ Contact EA-PA for a copy of the current Spectrafax media list being used for the disaster. Compare this list to local media guides and/or media lists provided by the state PAO and FEMA regional office to make sure the Spectrafax list is accurate and complete.
(Note: Primary list must be completed immediately, during PDA or within 24 hours of declaration.)
- ❑ Provide primary media list to lead PAO and EA-PA to modify Spectrafax list to meet the needs of the disaster.
- ❑ Once a Joint Information Center is established, work with the office support staff to send changes and additions to the Spectrafax list throughout disaster operations, as necessary.
- ❑ Provide current media list to all JIC departments, as requested.
- ❑ Identify demographic information for all populations in the disaster area, including multilingual, multicultural and special populations.
 - Work closely with community relations, multilingual operations and ESF-5, to identify all populations affected by the disaster.
 - Develop demographic profiles.
- ❑ Identify market features and terrain that may limit broadcast and newspaper coverage serving the disaster area. Analyze media market in the disaster area:
 - Consult with regional PAO and state PAO.
 - Determine primary newspaper, radio and television outlets.
 - Identify key contacts (if appropriate).
 - Determine media outlets that reach each significant diverse audience. (Talk with disaster victims to find out what they read, watch, or listen to regularly.)
 - Identify special needs, specialty publications, or cable outlets.
 - Consult with multilingual operations and community relations.
- ❑ Maintain a comprehensive and current media list throughout the disaster, based on demographic profiles, current media guidebooks, media requests and any other information that would ensure dissemination of response, recovery and mitigation information to all populations affected by the disaster.

News Analysis and Monitoring

Monitor daily news reports including TV, radio, internet and newspaper clips, and provide an analysis of main stories that affect response, recovery and mitigation operations. Identify trends in media coverage, problem areas to be addressed and make recommendations for action to lead PAO.

Objectives

- ❑ Monitor disaster coverage to make sure that the media is utilizing critical disaster response, recovery and mitigation messages in a timely and accurate manner.
- ❑ Identify potential problem areas and areas of opportunity in order to improve the flow of information and/or the delivery of services.
- ❑ Keep the lead PAO, FCO, regional PAO and other JIC and DFO staff informed about quantity, quality and nature of media coverage regarding the disaster response, recovery and mitigation efforts.
- ❑ Provide historical documentation.

- ❑ Prepare daily news analysis report for lead PAO, FCO and JIC staff. Major media outlets to be monitored will include daily newspapers, major television networks, local affiliates and key radio stations in counties designated disaster areas.

News Analysis

- ❑ Write a daily summary of media coverage, using appropriate newspaper clips and tapes of radio and television news and interview programs. Provide to lead PAO for FCO meeting and distribution.
- ❑ Identify trends in media coverage and write a daily issues analysis report for distribution along with clips and summaries to the lead PAO, FCO, SCO, regional PAO and EA-PA. Analysis should be completed before the morning FCO staff meeting.

(Notify lead PAO and rapid response IMMEDIATELY of any newspaper or broadcast reports containing inaccurate, misleading information, or critical commentary regarding FEMA, the state, or any other government or voluntary agency providing response, recovery and mitigation services.)

News Monitoring

- ❑ Obtain daily newspapers. Read and clip morning papers by 7:00 a.m. In outlying counties, it may be necessary to arrange for field PAOs, community relations staff or disaster recovery center managers to review and fax disaster-related articles.
- ❑ Visit web sites of local newspapers and television stations.
- ❑ Present copies of major stories or potential problems immediately to lead PAO for the FCO and rapid response.
- ❑ Have copies of significant clips ready for morning FCO staff and/or planning meeting. E-mail or fax these to EA-PA as soon as possible.
- ❑ Fax daily clips, including significant clips from morning papers, to the regional office and to EA-PA 202-646-4086, by 9:00 a.m., EST or e-mail links and stories as appropriate.

Television and Radio

- ❑ During the response and early days of recovery efforts, each broadcast should be monitored as it happens. As the recovery progresses, VCRs can be set to record automatically and tapes can be reviewed daily.
- ❑ **Notify lead PAO and rapid response IMMEDIATELY of any newspaper or broadcast reports containing inaccurate, misleading information, or critical commentary regarding FEMA, the state, or any other government or voluntary agency providing response, recovery and mitigation services.**
- ❑ Work with lead PAO and operations support to be sure adequate equipment is available at the Joint Information Center to monitor key outlets.
- ❑ Suggested specifications for the television monitoring equipment:
 - 5 TV sets - 13" with head phone jack
 - 5 VHS VCRs with on-screen programming and 5 event (or more) memory
 - Wiring and cable connectors to hook everything together
- ❑ Videotape *all* news broadcasts about the disaster during the response phase and while disaster recovery centers are open.

Internet

Many newspapers, television and radio stations now have sites on the World Wide Web.

Monitoring news over the Internet allows access to news sources outside the immediate area and, since larger sites tend to update throughout the day, a more timely response to developing stories.

- ❑ Build a list of relevant media links. Check the EA-PA Intranet (pao.fema.net or fema.gov/pao) for pertinent links there. Use online resources such as Gebbie (www.gebbie.com), Newspapers Online (www.newspapers.com), Radio-Locator (www.radio-locator.com), TV Radio World (www.tvradioworld.com) and the American Journalism Review (www.ajr.org). Also, search on traditional search engines like Yahoo (www.yahoo.com) and Infoseek (www.infoseek.com).
- ❑ Newspaper sites tend to be the most reliable sources of information. Even small weeklies are likely to post their top stories on the Internet. Major newspaper sites usually update throughout the day, and many feature searchable archives and access to wire services.
- ❑ Many radio stations broadcast over the Internet in RealAudio. (The RealPlayer is available from www.real.com. Check with the network staff for the applicable proxy settings.) As necessary, PAOs can monitor radio news broadcasts over the Internet when the station is otherwise unavailable.
- ❑ Some television stations make news stories available in RealVideo. (Again, download the RealPlayer from www.real.com.) These sites are useful to monitor television news in areas where field personnel may not be present. Some stations publish transcripts of previous news broadcasts on their web sites. Others provide access to wire services.

Working With The Media

Establishing credibility and productive working relationships with representatives of the media is critical. In most instances representatives of the media will be cooperative in publishing important disaster recovery information. In an ideal world, the media would simply use all news releases as issued. Sometimes media outlets — especially in major media markets — do not see disaster recovery information as important news after the initial stories about the event. It is important to try to make the news media understand the important public service role they play in the recovery effort.

Media Relationships

Basic guidelines for working with the media in all Joint Information Center functions are to:

- ❑ Be aware of and sensitive to media deadlines.
- ❑ Respond promptly to all media inquiries. Always answer requests for information, even if only to report that the information is not available or will not be available until a given time in the future.
- ❑ Reply to questions thoroughly and accurately. Do not provide more information than is requested.
- ❑ Be honest and open. If you don't know, say so and get back to the reporter as quickly as possible with the correct answer. Ask about deadlines.
- ❑ Do not get into in-depth discussions with reporters about the programs of other agencies.
- ❑ Always be diplomatic. Especially if a request seems unreasonable, deal with it in a tactful manner.

Standard Operating Procedures

Media Inquiries

The routine procedures to be used in receiving, responding to and monitoring inquiries and interviews within FEMA are as follows:

- ❑ Referring media inquiries— The responsibility for referring media inquiries should always be assumed by the staff person receiving the call.
 - Do not ask the reporter to call another number.
 - Take the reporter's name, number and affiliation.
 - Ask the reporter if he or she is working on a deadline.
 - Assure the reporter that someone will call back; immediately call the appropriate program official or HQ EA-PA, and ask the person to return the reporter's call. If this is done, the reporter can probably be saved one or more extra telephone calls.
- ❑ Responding to inquiries— Inquiries fall into two basic categories: those of a factual nature and those of a policy nature.
 - For inquiries of a factual nature, the Public Affairs staff will provide reporters with accurate information in every case possible or refer them to the appropriate program manager. Such responses, however, are to be limited to those program areas in which the responding FEMA official has some expertise to ensure the accuracy of the information.

— For inquiries of a policy nature, the inquiry is to be referred to the FCO or a designated spokesperson in the JIC before a public response is made. The premature or incomplete release of policy information could result in public confusion, loss of credibility and/or adverse publicity. Public response to policy questions is the prerogative solely of the FEMA Director, and questions are to be referred to HQ EA-PA for coordination and consultation with the appropriate FEMA officials.

National Media— All requests for interviews from the national media are to be referred to the Office of Public Affairs or Deputy Director. All contacts with national media are to be reported to EA-PA. Maintain a list of national media contacts for HQ EA-PA.

Broadcast Operations

FEMA's broadcast operations play an important role in communicating important information following a major disaster and reassuring disaster victims that federal, state and local officials are responding to their needs. Through the Satellite Broadcasts, FEMA Radio Network, Recovery Radio Network and the Internet, FEMA is able to communicate to the public quickly and effectively.

Recovery Radio Network

In many disasters live broadcasts on local radio can be a valuable part of the emergency public information effort, especially during the initial response period. In such cases, FEMA works with local broadcasters to set up the Recovery Radio Network. The Recovery Radio Network is primarily used in areas where radio signals have been damaged during a disaster and there is a need to reestablish a radio signal to the public. This is most likely to occur in the islands following a hurricane or typhoon.

The on-air product of the Recovery Radio Network is typically a five to ten minute newscast-style program that provides official information about the disaster response and recovery process and available disaster assistance programs. It is produced hourly, or several times a day, at the Joint Information Center by FEMA Public Affairs.

Objectives

- ❑ To inform disaster victims of all of the disaster response, recovery and mitigation programs available to them, and the limitations of those programs.
- ❑ To instill confidence in the community that all levels of government are working in partnership to restore essential services, and to help individuals begin to put their lives back together.
- ❑ To provide timely and accurate information about the disaster recovery program to, and through, the local media.

Standard Operating Procedures

- ❑ Identify operating radio stations in the disaster area, especially EAS primary stations.
- ❑ Develop plan for distributing live radio feed from JIC to all stations.
- ❑ Develop format and schedule, assign staff.
- ❑ Arrange for production equipment. Requirements may include:
 - Off-air monitor (radio receiver)
 - Microphones, stands, cables
 - Mixer
 - Telephone Coupler
 - Portable and studio cassette records and supply of cassettes
 - Computer-based audio editing system
 - Computer and word processing software
- ❑ Prepare participation/rebroadcast agreement for stations.

- ❑ Prepare promotion plan, including news releases, PSAs, fliers, etc.
- ❑ Contact radio stations to explain the operation of the network and to solicit participation.
- ❑ Produce broadcasts per schedule; adjusting as circumstances warrant.
- ❑ Prepare newscast using as many stories as possible within the allotted time - usually five or ten minutes.
- ❑ Begin and end the broadcast exactly at the time scheduled.
- ❑ Write scripts in broadcast style and secure approvals before using them on the air.
- ❑ Prepare after-action report, archive of scripts and tapes and letters of appreciation to participants.

FEMA Radio Network

The FEMA Radio Network (FRN) is a special news service for radio stations around the country. Simply by dialing a toll-free telephone number (1-800-323-5248), stations can access a series of recorded actualities with the latest reports on the federal government's emergency response and recovery operations. Stations may then record these briefs for use in their newscasts.

Stations can interview federal officials live via telephone or 56Kb digital line. Through the FEMA Radio Network and their local media, disaster victims can learn where to apply for disaster assistance, where Red Cross shelters are located and detailed information on exactly how the disaster assistance application process works. The Lead PAO will designate a member of the Joint Information Center staff to serve as FEMA Radio Network liaison.

Objectives

- ❑ To inform disaster victims of all of the disaster response, recovery and mitigation programs available to them, and the limitations of those programs.
- ❑ To instill confidence in the community that all levels of government are working in partnership to restore essential services and to help individuals put their lives back together.
- ❑ To provide timely and accurate information about the disaster recovery process and disaster assistance programs to disaster victims through radio news and feature programming.

Standard Operating Procedures

- ❑ Contact the FEMA Radio Network POC to discuss and set schedule for actualities.
- ❑ Work with Lead PAO to develop issues and talking points for FCO or a program manager to use for the daily FEMA Radio actualities.
- ❑ Meet with Lead PAO and FCO to discuss focus of the day and talking points for FEMA Radio Network actualities.
- ❑ Call radio network POC at (202) 646-2732 to set up the day's interview.
- ❑ Keep a running log of calls, subjects, sound bites, individuals interviewed, etc.
- ❑ Prepare an after-action report and submit to Lead PAO.

Research and Writing

Research and writing is composed of three functions: editorial production, PAO liaisons, and graphics.

Editorial Production

Prepare news releases, daily summaries, media advisories, feature articles, fact sheets, public service announcements and other written materials.

Objectives

- ❑ Write news releases, media advisories, feature articles, fact sheets and other documents designed to demonstrate that FEMA, the state and other government and voluntary agencies are working in partnership to provide critical disaster response, recovery and mitigation programs.
- ❑ Write copy providing disaster victims with accurate and timely information about the availability, details and limits of disaster assistance programs.

Standard Operating Procedures

- ❑ Establish a system for assigning and tracking writing projects. Daily meetings of research and writing staff are useful in tracking assignments and making adjustments in schedules and workloads.
- ❑ Paste up a large writing “project status sheet” on the wall listing all writing projects, due dates, assignments and status.
- ❑ Establish procedures for routing completed materials.
- ❑ All releases must be approved by:
 - Program officer
 - Lead PAO
 - State lead PAO
 - SCO
 - FCO
 - EA-PA (if the issue is of national concern)
 - Other agency PAOs (if pertinent)

NOTE: *Make sure all authorized “sign-off” personnel assign a back-up person with the authority to review and approve releases and other materials.*

- ❑ Keep approval forms and approved drafts on file.
- ❑ Edit for program accuracy, consistency, timeliness and clarity.
- ❑ Use the Associated Press style for material provided to the media.
- ❑ Use the FEMA Style Guide (available at www.fema.gov/pao)
- ❑ Refer to the FEMA Writers Handbook for sample news releases, fact sheets, PSAs and other documents used in disaster operations. (Available at www.fema.gov/pao)
- ❑ Work closely with lead PAO and other key JIC staff to develop story ideas.

- ❑ Work with appropriate PAO Liaisons to ensure accuracy and program intent.
- ❑ Refer to boilerplate releases and those used in previous disasters for language and style. If appropriate, adapt format for existing situation.
- ❑ Programs change and local priorities or sensitivities differ, so **always** double check facts, even in previously approved copy.
- ❑ Coordinate with other agency PAOs if releases refer to their operations.
- ❑ Office support staff coordinates distribution of approved news releases.

Graphics and Production

Produce fliers, brochures, posters and other printed materials to meet public affairs requirements and to support other information needs of the DFO, including Community Relations, Human Services, Mitigation, Infrastructure and other program areas.

Objectives

- ❑ Provide a central function in the Joint Information Center for the production of printed materials in support of Public Affairs, Community Relations and other DFO departments.
- ❑ Ensure accuracy, consistency and a standardized professional-quality presentation for all informational materials distributed to the media or the public from the Joint Information Center or the DFO.

Standard Operating Procedures

- ❑ Provide graphic design and production of such printed materials as fliers, brochures, posters and other documents for the Joint Information Center, Community Relations and other DFO departments.
- ❑ Establish procedures for JIC and other DFO staff to request the design and production of printed materials.
- ❑ Follow procedures for approvals.
- ❑ Work with Finance and Admin to arrange contract for printing needs.
- ❑ Begin production of DRC location/toll-free number fliers and posters immediately for distribution to centers by courier and throughout the community by Community Relations and voluntary agencies. Community Relations should determine how many copies to have printed.

PAO Liaison Operations

Provide internal communication links with key program areas including:

- ❑ Emergency support functions
- ❑ All other federal/state/local agencies not physically located in the DFO
- ❑ Human services
- ❑ Infrastructure
- ❑ Hazard mitigation
- ❑ Community relations
- ❑ Congressional affairs

- ❑ National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)
- ❑ National Teleregistration Center (NTC)
- ❑ National Processing Service Center
- ❑ Disaster recovery centers

Objectives

- ❑ Maintain open communication and positive working relations between DFO program staff and the Joint Information Center, by providing each program area with a single point of contact.
- ❑ Serve as reporters for the JIC, developing specific program knowledge and the ability to identify potential problems.
- ❑ Identify program facts or activities that need to be supported in news releases, PSAs, media briefings, or otherwise disseminated to disaster victims.

PAO Liaison Coordinator

- ❑ A PAO liaison coordinator is only activated in large or catastrophic disasters.
- ❑ Establish daily reporting procedures for each PAO liaison to communicate to the Joint Information Center potential problems in all key program areas.
- ❑ Establish procedures for each PAO liaison to provide story ideas for development and promotion in the media.
- ❑ Provide daily report on area activities to the lead PAO of activities and findings.

PAO Liaisons

- ❑ Notify the lead PAO immediately of any potential developments or critical information that may need public affairs support or action.
- ❑ Daily activities of each PAO liaison:
 - Meet with program head daily to check progress of activities.
 - Gather daily numbers, activities reports.
 - Attend staff and other program area meetings.
 - Establish relations with program staff members.
- ❑ Depending on the scale of the disaster and the physical setup of DFO, PAO liaisons may establish a work station in the program area.

Recovery Times

Recovery Times is a newsletter produced by FEMA with input from state, local and federal agencies and volunteer organizations. It provides information for disaster victims about disaster assistance programs, the response and recovery process, and mitigation and preparedness activities.

Recovery Times is produced and edited by EA-PA with input from the Disaster Field Office. The lead PAO assigns a coordinator/writer at the Joint Information Center to oversee gathering information, photographs and story ideas, and transmitting that information to the *Recovery Times* editor at HQ.

Objectives

- ❑ To provide official, timely and accurate response, recovery, mitigation and preparedness information directly to disaster victims in printed form.
- ❑ To promote an understanding of disaster response, recovery, mitigation and preparedness programs and policies, how people can apply for disaster assistance and what they can expect after they apply.
- ❑ To help instill confidence that FEMA, the state and other government and voluntary agencies are working in partnership to help disaster victims begin the recovery process.

Standard Operating Procedures

First Issue

- ❑ Contact FEMA HQ editor to determine general content needed for issue, target audience and any special language needs.
- ❑ Work with state PAO to get message from governor (no more than 250 words).
- ❑ Obtain photographs immediately. Use FEMA photographers or contact local newspapers, state agencies or other federal agencies. Transmit photos electronically as an attached file via cc:Mail.
- ❑ Photographs should be high resolution and scanned using the following specifications:
 - 266 dpi gray scale
 - 4 inch width
- ❑ Work with state PAO to arrange for state agency telephone numbers to be provided and checked for accuracy.
- ❑ Provide distribution plan for newsletter to HQ editor. Plan must include number and addresses of where copies are to be sent; name and phone number of contact at that address; date when issues are to be delivered. (See distribution section below.)
- ❑ Be certain to have final proof signed off by FEMA FCO and PAO and state SCO and PAO and other officials as needed.

Second and Subsequent Issues

- ❑ Contact FEMA HQ editor to discuss which boilerplate articles are available/suitable and what needs to be developed by DFO staff writers.
- ❑ Get messages from state and federal coordinating officers (no more than 250 words each).
- ❑ Develop and write success stories, profiling disaster victims and their experiences with FEMA/state response and recovery assistance and with mitigation.
- ❑ Make other story assignments. Each writer will do the research, interview program managers and others, compile facts from printed material and other pertinent sources, and get preliminary story approval from sources.
- ❑ Make photo assignments. (Note: Photographers must identify date, place and people in photos.)
- ❑ Obtain written in-house approval on stories (using sample sign-off sheet) from: FEMA lead PAO, state lead PAO, appropriate program managers, other agencies as needed, FEMA Office of General Counsel lead at DFO.
- ❑ **To streamline approval process, request that reviewers edit for content only— not style, grammar, etc.**
- ❑ Send approved copy to HQ editor as an attachment to an e-mail or by fax.
- ❑ Obtain sign-offs on final proofs by having the lead PAO, FCO and SCO initial each page. Fax initialed proofs to HQ and file originals.

A Few Reminders

- ❑ Use “toll-free application number” or substitute other words for “Teleregistration.” Encourage people to “apply by phone.”
- ❑ Spell-check every document. Do not use hard returns except at the end of paragraphs.
- ❑ **Call to verify every telephone number contained within a story and in the “Clip-and-Save” phone box**
- ❑ Use upper and lower case in headlines.
- ❑ When attributing quotes, always use the title and the name followed by the word “said” i.e., Federal Coordinating Officer Bob Gunter said.

Distribution Guidelines

- ❑ With lead PAO, FCO and HQ editor, determine rough publication schedule, i.e., number of issues to be prepared, number of copies to be printed and delivery date. Define distribution goal:
 - Should *Recovery Times* be targeted only to disaster victims or to a wider audience for mitigation messages?

- Determine range of distribution system needed, i.e., multi-state, statewide, non-contiguous, moderate area, countrywide, county-side, citywide, localized by neighborhood.
- ❑ Identify potential bulk distributors operating in affected area. Examples:

State-wide or multi-county—Major publications with circulations covering entire disaster area; daily or weekly newspapers, trade associations, business associations, non-profit organizations, government groups with memberships/branch offices in affected areas; state government departments with offices in each county; lobby organizations; volunteer and/or advocacy groups with sub-offices in each county; associations of county or municipal governments; state emergency services office. Use state capital and state government phone books, state personnel in DFO.

County-wide—County government departments, i.e. sheriff, firefighters’ associations; county branches of state departments; associations of municipal governments; chambers of commerce; labor unions; libraries; banks; senior citizen centers; food banks, volunteer relief/charitable organizations; newspapers; newspaper distribution agencies; county emergency service office; post offices; schools; youth organizations. Utilize local and/or county seat phone book, EMA personnel.

City—Community outreach programs of police, sheriff departments; libraries; branch offices of state/county departments; senior citizen centers; food kitchens; newspapers; newspaper distribution agencies; chamber of commerce; trade associations; labor unions; banks; health department; Boy and Girl Scouts; legal associations; fire stations; park and recreation departments. Utilize local phone book, EMA personnel
- ❑ Call or visit potential distributors to discuss *Recovery Times*. Explain the benefit for disaster victims and others and talk about its content and size. Ask for their assistance. In contacting potential distributors, determine a suitable amount for each branch or member, and obtain their cooperation in accepting a bulk quantity sent by them to their members and branch offices. If necessary, offer free envelopes for repackaging.
- ❑ Start a chronological file of participating distributors, one page per distributor, showing name of contact person, address to which newsletters are to be sent, telephone number, method of determining quantity (i.e. 15 per library), and total quantity requested. Quantities, contact person, may vary from issue to issue, and then changes can be noted to the file and dated as they are made.
- ❑ Determine the required print quantity. Contact all DFO sections to determine quantities they will need. These include:
 - Community Relations
 - Disaster Recovery Centers
 - Congressional liaison
 - Legislative liaison
 - VOLAG
 - Hazard Mitigation
 - Infrastructure teams
 - JIC for distribution to the media

- State agencies including Human Service and Department of Labor
- ❑ Enter these requests in the file in the same order as received.

Determine how *Recovery Times* will be delivered to each distributor. (Enter this information in file.) Those in the Disaster Field Office will be delivered by hand. Other methods include:

- Drop ship by printer – normal delivery is 2-3 days. Overnight delivery is possible, but be aware it is more costly.
- Pickup at the DFO
- Local courier
- Personal delivery

www.fema.gov

In November 1994 FEMA began providing information to the public via the Internet. In just a year, more than one million users had accessed the emergency information posted on FEMA's homepage on the World Wide Web. The system is updated daily by EA-PA with news releases and feature stories sent to headquarters electronically by FEMA public affairs staff working in Disaster Field Offices.

Objectives

- ❑ Provide information about the response and recovery effort and disaster assistance programs available to disaster victims in a particular state following a disaster declaration.
- ❑ Promote an understanding of disaster response, recovery, mitigation and preparedness programs and policies, how people can apply and what they can expect after they apply.
- ❑ Provide a chronological account of the disaster response, recovery and mitigation process following a disaster.

Standard Operating Procedures

- ❑ Send news releases to EA-PA daily by e-mail.
- ❑ News releases should concern significant events, such as the opening of Disaster Recovery Centers, daily or weekly round-ups, etc.
- ❑ To send news releases to EA-PA by e-mail:
 - ❑ Delete the header (FEMA seal, state seal, etc.)
 - ❑ Delete the contact names and telephone numbers
 - ❑ Put the release date immediately after the city, state in the lead paragraph.
 - ❑ Delete the -30- , ###, and any additional information about FEMA radio, etc.
 - ❑ Save the altered file as:
 - For MS Word — save the file as “text only,” name the file using the two letter state abbreviation followed by the release number then a period and “txt”.
- ❑ Open up e-mail:
- ❑ Use the “Prepare a message” button or from the “Message” (new message command line) pull down window. Send the message to hqwebsvcs@fema.gov. Type in any special notes or instructions concerning the news releases you are sending.
- ❑ Use the “Attach a file” command (button or the “Attach” pull down window). Locate each file you wish to send and attach it. You can attach more than file to a single message.
- ❑ Send the message.
- ❑ Visit FEMA's homepage to learn about disaster response and recovery operations at other Disaster Field Offices: www.fema.gov

www.fema.gov/pao

The Public Affairs Division has established a Web site for disaster public affairs officers. PAOs may access and download the latest version and updates to the Public Affairs Disaster Operations Field Guide, recent issues of *Recovery Times*, federal and state seals, media lists links and templates of FEMA letterhead, backgrounders, news releases, fact sheets and more. If you are at a FEMA facility, visit pao.fema.net; from your home, visit www.fema.gov/pao.



Special Projects

Plan, organize, execute and provide support for projects that are not necessarily part of every disaster.

Objective

- ❑ To support the goals and objectives of FEMA and the federal/state disaster response, recovery and mitigation efforts by providing planning, organization and execution of special projects.

Standard Operating Procedures

- ❑ Under the direction of the lead PAO, plan and execute individual projects, which may include but are not limited to:
 - Public service campaigns for radio, TV, or print
 - Video documentaries
 - Surveys
 - Special productions
 - Internal training materials
 - Logistical support of public meetings and presentations
- ❑ Organize and staff individual projects as necessary to support requests from the FCO, SCO, EA-PA and lead PAO.
- ❑ Determine needs and hire necessary staff to cover operations.
- ❑ Organize and coordinate news conferences and briefings.
 - Find a site that is relatively convenient for the media and the key participants. Consider room size, availability of electrical outlets, telephones, and, if applicable, workspace or phones for media use.
 - Be sensitive to media deadlines and possible conflicts with other news events. Take into account travel time for media.
 - Give news media as much advance notice as possible. Provide date, time, place and subject. This may be done by telephone or media advisory, or both.
 - Prepare media kits for distribution to the media at the news conference and to members of the media who do not attend. Materials should include a news release and fact sheets. You may want to include the prepared statement of FCO or other officials and biographical information about key participants
 - Prepare a briefing sheet including location, date, time, subject, anticipated attendance and other pertinent background information for key participants and officials who will attend. A list of anticipated questions, both positive and negative, that may be asked during the news conference should be prepared for key participants. Participants should be advised of other significant issues.
 - Prepare the agenda to include an introduction of key participants, brief statements indicating newsworthy information and time for questions and answers.
 - Begin on time and kept a pre-designated or reasonable time frame, generally 30 minutes to one hour. If it appears that members of the media still have questions

after the specified time frame, you may close the formal conference and allow an information session to continue.

- Announce the close of the news conference by standing up and saying thank you. If an informal session is to continue, announce that also.
- Provide a sign-in sheet for reporters to note their names, media outlets or other affiliation and telephone numbers.
- If questions were unresolved during the news conference, get the information to the persons who asked the questions.
- Distribute releases to media not in attendance.
- Prepare summary report for files and for inclusion with activities reports.

Photo Documentation

Provides photo documentation of disaster response, recovery and mitigation activities for *Recovery Times* and for use by the DFO, Joint Information Center, HQ EA-PA and other agencies, as requested.

Objectives

- ❑ To provide central photo support services to meet the requirements of *Recovery Times*, HQ EA-PA, the FEMA Internet Web site, the Joint Information Center and other DFO divisions.
- ❑ To provide historical documentation to support ongoing projects and future reporting and training requirements of FEMA and other agencies.

Standard Operating Procedures

- ❑ Evaluate equipment and photo services needs.
- ❑ Work with Finance and Admin to arrange for equipment and for the purchasing, developing and printing of film. Make sure contractor can provide quality service and a quick turnaround.
- ❑ Establish procedures for photographing disaster activities.
- ❑ Emphasize people in photos (victims and disaster workers).
- ❑ Be selective. Think in photojournalism terms. We need good pictures that tell a story.
- ❑ Keep written records of each photo taken, including date, place and names of people.
- ❑ Review and eliminate duplicate, bad quality and insignificant photos.
- ❑ Set up photo cataloging system. Log and provide the following information:
 - Date shot
 - Disaster name and number
 - Location (City, State)
 - Subject
 - Full names of recognizable people (verify spelling)
 - Names of buildings and roads, etc.
 - Key words that will help identify the photo's highlights
 - Photographer's name

(Note: All official photography is FEMA property.)

- ❑ Provide photos and documentation to *Recovery Times* liaison at Joint Information Center for transfer to *Recovery Times* editor at HQ EA-PA.
 - Send to HQ EA-PA for processing onto CD format.
- ❑ Send photos for Recovery or for posting on FEMA's Internet Web site as follows:
 - Notify EA-PA's Internet Point of Contact – Donna Avallone at (202) 646-4600
 - Save as .jpg or .gif file
 - 72 dpi (Internet)
 - 300 dpi (*Recovery Times*)

- 6“ X 4”
 - 432 X 232 pixels
- Use these dimensions for both landscape and portrait orientation
- Transfer to FEMA’s FTP server using the DAE account
- ❑ Coordinate photo documentation activities with the FEMA Photo Desk at 202-646-4600.

Multilingual Operations

Keeps diverse communities informed of response, recovery and mitigation programs. Provides language support for joint information center, community relations and congressional projects, satellite broadcasts and *Recovery Times*.

Objectives

- ❑ Ensure that all populations affected by the disaster receive accurate and timely information about disaster response, recovery and mitigation programs through appropriate media, and in specific languages according to demographic information.
- ❑ Ensure all Equal Opportunity standards are met in the dissemination of information to disaster victims.

Standard Operating Procedures

- ❑ Identify language needs and key media to reach those audiences.
- ❑ The multilingual manager will be deployed immediately to coordinate with the lead PAO to form a Multilingual Department within the JIC, if required.
- ❑ When necessary, arrange to deploy translators to the DFO, or coordinate with Finance and Admin to secure the services of a local translation firm that can provide a quick turn-around for translation work.
- ❑ Develop and maintain a comprehensive and current multilingual media list based on :
 - demographic profiles; information from state or local PAOs; current media guidebooks; media requests.
- ❑ Visit www.fema.gov/pao for boilerplate releases and other materials in Spanish.
- ❑ Maintain contact with program managers to determine areas needing additional attention. Keep PAO staff informed on each program's progress and problems.
- ❑ Monitor daily news reports of multilingual print and broadcast media. Compile daily media analysis and synopsis of major issues.
- ❑ Brief FCO, ERT-N, ERT-A and other FEMA regional staff on the cultural sensitivities and diversities of populations within the disaster area.
- ❑ Coordinate with Community Relations to reach communities with such special language needs as Braille and Sign Language.
- ❑ In conjunction with Demographics and Media List Development, identify disaster-area multilingual media market. Develop and maintain current media list.
- ❑ Coordinate with JIC Office Support to have Multilingual Ops included on distribution.
- ❑ Attend daily meetings to remain abreast of sensitive program areas, issues and policies that may affect Multilingual Operations.
- ❑ Maintain a multilingual media monitoring system.
- ❑ Provide translations for *Recovery Times*, news releases, fliers and other materials.
- ❑ Respond to requests for multilingual interviews.
- ❑ Assist in production of multilingual programming for satellite broadcasts, radio and television.

Getting There and Back

Deployment Availability

The Automated Deployment Database (ADD) system requires that reservists call the toll-free number 1-800-486-6325 (or 202-646-4548 in the Washington, DC area) to let FEMA know whether or not you are available for deployment. You can call and change your status as often as necessary, but you must call at least every 30 days. If you don't, your status in the database will automatically be changed to "not available." And that means you don't get called for disaster assignments. If you are listed as available in the database, you are expected to deploy to the disaster area in a timely manner. If you are available in the system but you cannot deploy to the assignment, it is considered a "refusal" and will be noted as such on your record.

New improvements that affect FEMA DAE deployment policies and procedures went into effect on August 1, 2002. These improvements require the following of you:

- Unless you are deployed, you are required to record your availability for deployment at least once each month, using the appropriate toll-free number. Please note that when you record your status for deployment as *available*, you are making yourself available to deploy for a period of not less than two weeks, and to any location where FEMA conducts disaster operations.
- If you record your status as available for deployment, but refuse to deploy, failure to provide an adequate rationale for inaccurately recording your availability could result in termination.
- Beginning August 1, 2002, you are required to accept deployment orders of any type only from FEMA's Deployment Support Office located in the Human Resources Division. Your Region should no longer contact you for this purpose. Your Region may contact you to inform you of a training opportunity, meeting or other non-disaster specific travel, but even in these cases, the Deployment Support Office will issue your deployment orders.
- Attached is a copy of the newest "Deployment Information Guide" to assist you in recording the specifics of your disaster deployment. From August 1, 2002 onward, you will be provided all of the information required to complete the guide whenever you are deployed. Please ensure that you record all of the information in your guide when you are called, particularly the request number from the deployment database and the name of the person issuing your deployment orders.
- Once deployment travel arrangements are made, any situation causing more than an 8-hour delay beyond your required arrival time must be reported using the following process:

- When using National Travel, you are required to inform National Travel of your change in itinerary, and request their assistance in expediting your arrival;
- When using your own vehicle, you are required to call 1-888-853-9648 and leave a message explaining the reason for the delay and your new anticipated arrival time.
- Immediately upon arrival at your deployment site (i.e., DFO, training or meeting location), you are required to check in by phone by dialing 1-888-853-9648 and following the instructions provided. You are also required to use this same number when checking out and when updating your deployment information, such as where you are staying or your work phone number.

Checklist for Deployment

Although you should try to limit your personal belongings to what you can carry, following is a list of items you should consider when packing for deployment:

- ☐ Prescription medicine
- ☐ Medication for colds, headaches, etc.
- ☐ Driver's license
- ☐ Government credit card
- ☐ FEMA ID
- ☐ Important phone numbers
- ☐ Field guide
- ☐ Vitamins
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Extra pair of glasses or contacts
- ☐ FEMA jacket, shirts and cap

Travel Vouchers and Government Credit Card

You are responsible for filling out and filing your travel vouchers. Depending on the size of the disaster, there may be personnel at the DFO to assist you. You should file a voucher at least every two weeks. This means zeroing out your balance at your hotel and filing a voucher even though you are staying on. Use original receipts only, taped or pasted to a sheet of paper with your name and social security number on each page. Copy and keep a set for yourself. When you are at the DFO, travel vouchers are to be signed by someone who has signature authority. If you have to file a voucher and you are no longer at the DFO, mail it to your cadre manager.

You are responsible to VISA for your bill, regardless of when you get reimbursed. This is why it is important to file a travel voucher every two weeks. If you know you are going to be unable to pay VISA on time, call them regularly to discuss the situation.

Do not use your card for personal use or to withdraw cash unless you are on official travel or have been deployed. Be very careful about your VISA bill. Some DAEs have been terminated for

abuse of their government card, and VISA is now informing credit bureaus of accounts more than 90 days past due.

Payroll and Per Diem

Pay periods are based on a bi-weekly system, beginning on Sunday and ending the following second Saturday. Use a Time and Attendance Worksheet for Disaster Field Offices supplied by the DFO. Claim time worked in active duty status beginning from the time you leave home to travel to the DFO. Time may not be claimed for the return trip when you leave the DFO to return home. Per diem status begins when you leave home and continues until you return home.

Checking In and Checking Out of the DFO

When you are released from the disaster response operation or go to another one always check out. This entails going to personnel, getting the checkout form and getting the appropriate signatures on it before you leave. Turn in time sheets and equipment such as cell phones and pagers.

Important Telephone Numbers

General Numbers:

Application and Information	800-621-FEMA (3362)	
FEMA TTY Registration Number	800-462-7585	
Public Affairs Division, HQ	800-372-4792	202-646-4600
FEMA Photo Desk	202-646-2749	
Fax Number	202-646-4086	
Fax Number for Spectrafax	202-646-3916	POC: Morris Boone
Fax Number for Clips	202-646-4602	POC: Marty Bahamonde
FEMA Radio Network	800-323-5248	POC: Paul Luke
FEMA Web site	www.fema.gov	POC: Donna Avallone
Public Affairs Intranet site	www.fema.gov/pao	POC: Bri Rodriguez
FEMA Publications	800-480-2520	
National Travel	800-294-8283	

Headquarters Public Affairs Division 202-646-4600:

Donna Avallone – Web Services POC
 Marty Bahamonde – Web Services, media analyst
 Morris Boone – Spectrafax
 Mike Connolly – Speechwriter
 Aileen Cooper – Recovery Times
 John Czwartacki – Director, Public Affairs Division
 Epperson, David – Web Services
 Garrett-Wing, Debbie – ONP liaison, Citizen Corps liaison
 Carolyn Griffith – Cadre admin
 Holly Harrington – Writer, FEMA for Kids
 Don Jacks – Video projects
 Chad Kolton – Deputy Director, Public Affairs Division
 Paul Luke – Audiovisual specialist, TV room, radio room
 Kenneth Pond – Web Services
 Cynthia Ramsay-Taylor – Special Projects, New York DFO liaison
 Bri Rodriguez – National Cadre Manager, Training Manager
 Lara Shane – National news desk
 Mark Stevens – National Flood Insurance Program
 Carl Suchocki – Disaster declarations and statistics
 Michael Widomski – News desk
 V-Ann Wright – Administrative assistant

Regional Cadre Managers/Public Affairs Officers:

	<i>RPAO</i>	<i>Phone Number</i>	<i>Fax</i>	<i>Pager</i>
R01	Janice Melton	617-223-9546	9547	1080920
R02	Mike Beeman	212-680-3616	3681	1260447
R03	Ross Fredenburg	215-931-5614	5621	2272246
R04	Mary Hudak	770-220-5226	5230	2010843
R05	Linda Sacia	312-408-5515	5361	5218203
R06	David Passey	940-898-5287	5113	1364170
R07	Vacant	816-283-7080	7582	
R08	Ed Conley	303-235-4909	4820	2073959
R09	Jeanne Baker	415-923-7101	7010	
R10	Mike Howard	425-487-4610	4622	2070248

Privacy Act and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

The Privacy Act

The Privacy Act covers applicants for disaster assistance. This means that Public Affairs Officers must not release any information about applicants without their express written permission. For example:

- ❑ You may not confirm that a specific individual has applied for assistance or discuss the status of anyone's application, even though he or she may have already talked to a reporter.

You may, however, speak in generic terms about particular types of problems. For example, a reporter says he knows of a disaster victim who applied weeks ago but his or her house has not yet been inspected. You may tell the reporter that while you cannot talk about this person's application, you can say that there can be a number of ways that something like this can happen. For example, the inspector may have tried several times unsuccessfully to contact the person to schedule the inspection, or the applicant may have withdrawn his or her application.

- ❑ You may not give the name of an applicant to a reporter who wants to interview a disaster victim.

You may, however, contact an applicant and ask if he or she would like to talk to a reporter. You must make it clear that their decision will have no affect at all on their application for assistance, either favorably or negatively. If they do agree to an interview, you may give them the reporter's name and telephone number and let them initiate the contact. Never give a reporter an applicant's name or telephone number.

Public Information and Public Meetings

Public Affairs Officers may not withhold information that is deemed public information. This includes government-wide and agency-specific rules, regulations and instructions. **Information and written documents that are part of the decision-making process are not public, however, and should not be released.** For example, Preliminary Damage Assessments are used in the process of deciding whether or not to recommend that a particular area be declared a disaster area. They are not public information. The disaster declaration itself is public information and is released to the public through the news media.

Public meetings are meetings in which general information is shared about process, programs and procedures. Meetings where decisions are deliberated are not public meetings and thus are not open to the public. Applicant briefings are public meetings as are federal-state meetings.

FOIA Requests

Requests for agency records not considered to be public information are made formally under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). These requests must be in writing and sent to the Office of the General Counsel at FEMA Headquarters.

Media Contact Records

Record all media contacts, using log sheets for incoming and outgoing calls. An attempt should be made to keep track of media contacts at the Disaster Recovery Centers and through other disaster recovery personnel in the field. Media logs include:

- ☐ Action taken
- ☐ Date
- ☐ Fax number
- ☐ Media outlet
- ☐ Name of PAO responding
- ☐ Nature of inquiry
- ☐ Reporter
- ☐ Telephone number

Getting this information may take a little extra time but it provides a tracking system and helps establish sound media relations. Information collected on log sheets is used to establish a card file of local reporters assigned to cover the disaster recovery. It is always helpful to have the name of a reporter who has indicated an interest in the story.

Sample Handouts for Disaster Recovery Center and DFO Personnel

Since the media focus a great deal of attention on Disaster Recovery Centers, the Public Affairs Office provides guidance and instructions for field staff when dealing with reporters. Following are sample handouts for Public Affairs to use to provide information to recovery center and DFO personnel on dealing with the media.

Working With The Media At Disaster Recovery Centers

Notify the on-site PAO that media representatives are at the recovery center. If no PAO is present, quickly contact the Joint Information Center for guidance and then make every effort to provide basic information about the process and what is happening at the recovery center.

NEVER DISCUSS PROGRAM SPECIFICS OR POLICY ISSUES. You may refer reporters to program representatives for responses to specific questions.

QUESTIONS ABOUT FEMA POLICIES OR PROGRAMS MUST ALWAYS BE REFERRED TO THE PAO TO BE ANSWERED BY THE APPROPRIATE DESIGNATED SPOKESPERSON.

Media representatives are allowed into the centers. This includes television camera crews and photographers for newspapers and magazines. Ask reporters to cooperate by not interfering with the operations. While general filming of the goings-on at the center is acceptable, close-ups of interactions between disaster victims and agency representative require the victims' permission. Photographers also need to have the permission of individual victims in the center before taking pictures of them.

If reporters want interviews with applicants, they must arrange these interviews themselves. Interviews may be held inside Disaster Recovery Centers as long as they do not interfere with operations. You should remain nearby to be available to provide correct information. Once the reporter is gone, report back to PAOs at the Joint Information Center. Personal information from applicants' files is protected by the Privacy Act and is not to be released to the media.

Ask the media to help us help the disaster victims. Encourage the media to publicize the recovery center schedule, toll-free registration and Helpline numbers. Problems with the media should be referred to the on-site PAO or to the JIC. **Be sure to tell the media about the JIC**—it is the single source of accurate, up-to-date, official information about the entire disaster.

Public Affairs Officers for This Disaster Are:

FEMA:

Phone:

State:

Phone:

Dealing With The News Media

1. When contacted by a reporter take the name, organization and telephone number. Tell the reporter a Public Affairs Officer will call them right back. Then call the PAO. The PAO will talk with the reporter or arrange an interview with the person best able to respond to specific questions.
2. If you are asked by Public Affairs to talk to a reporter, respond only to inquiries regarding your own area of participation or expertise. Refer requests regarding other program area to the Joint Information Center.
3. Report all contacts with the media to the JIC.
4. Report any problems—rumors, inadequate, incorrect, or negative coverage—to the Public Affairs Officer or your sector's field PAO.
5. Other tips for responding to questions from reporters:
 - Listen to the entire question before responding.
 - Avoid answering questions that call for speculation on your part; e.g., "Is this the worst disaster you have ever seen?"; "How much is the recovery effort going to cost?"; or "How many applicants do you expect at the center?"
 - Beware of false assumptions and erroneous conclusions.
 - Avoid answering hypothetical questions.
 - Be alert to multiple questions.
6. Information regarding a disaster applicant is protected under the Privacy Act. No information regarding an applicant may be released to the media by a federal employee without the applicant's express written consent.
7. If there are any problems, call the Public Affairs Officer immediately.
8. **Be sure to tell members of the media about the JIC.** It is the one place where a reporter may find accurate, up-to-date, official information about the disaster response, recovery and mitigation programs.

Public Affairs Officers for This Disaster Are:

FEMA:

Phone:

State:

Phone:

Handling Television Coverage Of The Disaster Recovery Center

1. Be polite, courteous and responsive.
2. Remember that television reporters serve an important role in the recovery process by disseminating accurate information to the public. Your job is to help them get accurate information and a positive impression of the process. Primarily, you will be asked to provide background information about what is happening:
 - What is the process applicants follow?
 - How is it going?
 - Have you had any procedural problems?
 - What is the general impression of the day's activities?
 - How many people have been through the center?
 - What is the purpose of a center?
 - What is the mood of the victims?
3. Remain in control of the situation at all times. Think about and decide in advance what your communications objectives are.
4. Television crews should not be allowed to interfere with operations.
5. Television reporters should be advised that general filming of procedures is acceptable, but that they must be permission from individual disaster victims before shooting any close-up footage of them.
6. Do not serve as a liaison between a television reporter and the applicants. Remember information regarding a disaster applicant is protected under the Privacy Act. No information regarding an applicant may be released to the media by a federal employee without the applicant's express written consent.
7. Only a small portion of what you say to a television reporter may be used on the air; so choose your words carefully and stay away from unfamiliar subject matter. Do not be afraid to say, "I don't know," or to refer the reporter to someone with the appropriate expertise.
Public Affairs most often will station personnel at recovery centers to assist with television coverage. When a PAO is present, reporters should be referred to the PAO.

Public Affairs Officers for This Disaster Are:

FEMA:

Phone:

State:

Phone:

Media Interviews

The following advice for media interviews is designed for program managers in a disaster recovery operation or others who may be asked by the PAO to appear on television for a “stand-up” interview or appear as a guest on a talk show. If you have any questions, contact the PAO.

Before the interview

- Arrive early and try talk to the reporter before the interview and to get an idea of the reporter’s understanding of the issue. Offer to explain any details and points you think are important.
- Anticipate what might be asked. Think about and decide what your communications objectives are. Plan your responses and determine the major points you want to communicate.
- Make certain your facts come to mind easily and are up-to-date. The PAO can prepare a list of anticipated questions. Role-play the interview with the PAO.
- Keep current and be aware of the most recent news on the subject.
- Find out if there are other guests and know their positions on key issues.

During the interview

- Be relaxed and confident. You are the expert; you can and should maintain control of the interview.
- You can turn a related question toward the responses you want to make. Don’t try to evade tough questions. Answer directly and in the most positive way possible.
- After each question, pause and think out your answer. Unless the interview is “live,” blank space will be edited out. One way to buy time is to repeat the question before answering (If I understand you correctly, you are asking . . .)
- Keep your answers simple and direct. Avoid technical terms, jargon and acronyms.
- Speak to your intended audience in an honest and personable manner.
- Answer questions in concise 20- to 30-second segments.
- Do not give simple “yes” or “no” answers.
- Go into the answer as quickly as possible. Incorporate the question into your response, but it is best not to repeat the question verbatim.
- If you don’t know the answer, say so and offer to get the information.
- Answer in positive, accurate statements without reinforcing erroneous perceptions. Don’t repeat inaccurate information offered by the reporter.
- If you are questioned about facts which are totally incorrect, answer “No, that is not correct . . .” and then expand on the facts.
- If you are being recorded and find you are bungling the answer, stop and say “I’d like to start that again.” The revised version almost always will be used.
- Answer in complete statements, rather than adding to a reporter’s statement. It is likely that your answers will be used without any of the questions.
- Do not refer to the reporter by name. The reporter may not be included when the report is aired.
- An important rule to remember with the media is, “There are no dumb questions; only dumb answers.” Treat all questions as serious.

- In all interviews, there is always the possibility that you will be quoted out of context or made to look bad.
- Never speak to a reporter off the record. No interview is really off the record. Remember, everything you say to a reporter is quotable, even the off-hand comments after the interview is over.

You are the message

- How you look and convey your message may say more than your words. Look sharp; look interested; and convey an energetic appearance. Wear clothing appropriate to your position. Avoid wearing stripes and red.
- Remove dark glasses. Eye contact with the viewer is essential.
- A certain amount of nervousness is natural. It helps to get you “up” for the interview. Don’t be bothered by it. Even seasoned professionals get nervous.
- Avoid nervous habits such as tapping feet, drumming fingers or swinging legs. They are distracting and often divert the attention from what you are saying.
- Concentrate on the interviewer and maintain good eye contact.
- Keep your head up, looking at the interviewer. Don’t slouch or lean to one side. Don’t make any unnecessary movements, but use your hands to gesture as you would normally.
- If the reporter holds the microphone in front of you, don’t touch it. If using a lapel microphone, don’t tilt your head down when speaking. Use your normal tone of voice. Let the reporter or sound technician worry about the rest.
- If sitting, sit up straight in a straight back chair, if possible, and avoid low, overstuffed chairs or swivel chairs. If wearing a coat, sit on your coattail so your jacket doesn’t ride up on your neck.

After the interview

- Don’t ask to see a written story or view a tape before it makes the news. The answer will almost always be no, so don’t embarrass yourself and the reporter. The reporter may be willing to give you an edited copy.
- Provide the reporter with any promised information.
- Give the reporter as much background information as you have in written form. Be available to the reporter later if there are any follow-up questions.
- If a reporter botches the story and it contains many factual errors, advise the PAO. If no PAO is available, call the reporter and point out the factual errors. Be polite. Do not expect a retraction. If the same problems occur repeatedly with a particular reporter, advise the editor.

Public Affairs Officers for This Disaster Are:

FEMA:

Phone:

State:

Phone:

Public Notices

Several program areas are required to publish legal notices to announce the availability of federal funds for disaster recovery. Program managers will work through the Public Affairs Office to coordinate the placement of these notices. These notices generally are required for the Infrastructure, Mitigation and Housing Programs. In some cases, a combined notice will be used.

Steps for placing legal notices:

- Program manager contacts PAO regarding placement of legal notice.
- PAO determines most appropriate and cost-effective publication.
 - The basic requirement is that the notice be published in the “paper of record” for the declared disaster area.
 - Choices can include daily or weekly newspapers from the county, local, or major metropolitan area.
 - Obtain cost estimates and deadline information from classified advertising or legal notice departments.
- Contact Operations Support for a purchase order.
 - Remember, the PAO may be held responsible for costs of notices that are placed without approval.
- Obtain the copy for the public notice from the program area.
- Edit copy, verifying dates, names and locations.
- Send the public notice to the publication.
 - Request tear sheet to both Public Affairs and Operations Support Offices.
 - Request billing to Operations Support.